



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2007

Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Affairs Officer
610 N.W. Loop 410
San Antonio, Texas 78216
(210) 384-7440

**FABENS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
ALIEN SMUGGLING RESULTING IN DEATH OF "TEXAS 20 GIRL"**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that in El Paso 45-year-old Jose Alfredo Sifuentes-Sandoval pleaded guilty to his role in the death of the so-called "Texas 20 Girl," in April 2006.

Appearing before United States District Judge David Briones, Sifuentes pleaded guilty to conspiracy to smuggle aliens, encouraging and inducing entry and harboring, both resulting in death.

By pleading guilty, Sifuentes admitted that from October 20, 2005, to June 9, 2006, he and his associate in Juarez, Mexico, Amalia Baquera, aka "La Tia," conspired to smuggle into and harbor in the United States hundreds of illegal aliens, including 14-year-old Leybi Lorena Vigil Claros from El Salvador.

On April 27, 2006, EMS and El Paso County Sheriff's deputies responded to a 9-1-1 call from Sifuentes' residence located at 1340 Leaf Street in Fabens. When they arrived, authorities discovered Claros in the back seat of a van without a pulse or spontaneous respiration. The child was taken to the Del Sol Medical Center. Attempts to resuscitate her were unsuccessful; an autopsy revealed she died of a pulmonary thromboembolism. The victim was subsequently identified by her mother. Sifuentes originally told deputies that he found Claros on the side of Highway Texas 20 and attempted to get her medical treatment. Further investigation revealed, though, Sifuentes smuggled her into the United States at the Fabens Port of Entry and failed to seek timely medical attention despite the fact he had reason to believe that she was gravely ill.

Baquera is charged in the conspiracy count. Authorities are seeking Baquera's formal extradition from Mexico.

The case was investigated by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement together with the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys J. Brandy Gardes and Juanita Fielden are prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

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